

ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

4900 Rialto Road, West Chester, Ohio 45069 • (513) 645-4212
parishoffice@sgg.org • www.sgg.org • www.SGGResources.org
TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS: Sundays 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM High, 11:30 AM, 5:45 PM

Most Reverend Daniel L. Dolan, Pastor • Rev. Anthony Cekada
Rev. Charles McGuire • Rev. Vili Lehtoranta • Rev. Stephen McKenna

December 13, 2020
ADVENT III • GAUDETE SUNDAY
WITHIN THE OCTAVE • ST. LUCY, VM



¶ THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Today is Gaudete Sunday. The **Christmas Bake Sale** will take place in Helfta Hall after the morning Masses. Catechism Classes are at 10:40 AM. Vespers with Benediction are at 4:45 PM. The **Christmas Envelopes** are in the pews, both for the Novena of Masses and for the Memorial Poinsettia Offerings (due 12/16).

PLEASE DO NOT CRASH THE KNEELERS AT COMMUNION TIME. IF YOU MUST PUT ONE UP, BEND DOWN AND DO IT QUIETLY.

¶ EMBER DAYS

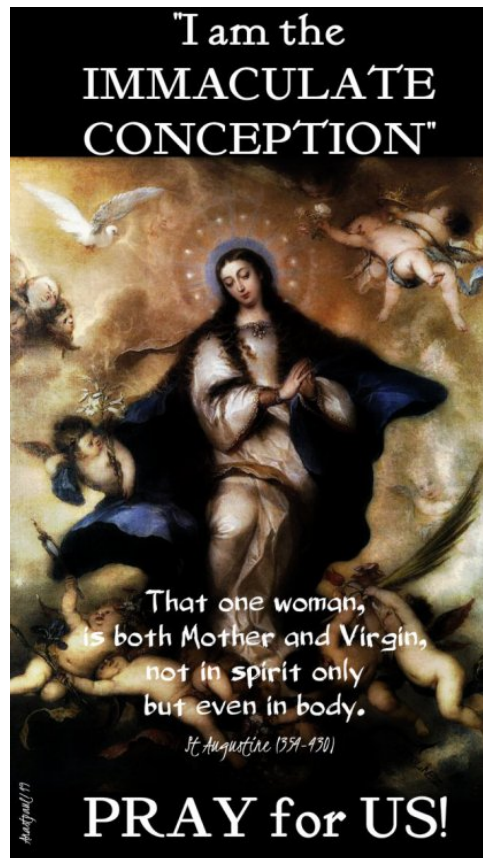
Wednesday, Friday and Saturday (December 16, 18 and 19) of this week are the Church's winter **Ember Days**. All Catholics between the ages of 21 and 59, inclusive, are bound by the Church's laws of fast, and all who have attained their 7th year must keep the abstinence (meat once at the principal meal on Wednesday and Saturday.)

¶ YOUR PRAYERS

Please pray for Fr. Francis Miller, Jan Curran, Gerry Keaveney, Debi Ellis, Theresa Osterhaus, and the repose of the soul of †Ronald Lotarski.

¶ DRIVERS NEEDED!

We need parishioners willing to drive our clergy to and from the airport for their mission trips. If you are able to help, please contact the office at (513) 645-4212 or parishoffice@sgg.org. Don't miss this opportunity to administer to those who so often administer to you with the Sacraments!



SIT IN THE BACK WITH FUSSY CHILDREN, AND TAKE THEM OUT AS SOON AS THEY CRY. BRING THEM BACK IN WHEN THEY'RE QUIET. IT WORKS! THANK YOU.

¶ CHRISTMAS DECORATING

We will be decorating the interior of the church for Christmas this **Friday, December 18th**, after the 8:00 AM High Mass until the devotions and Mass at 5:45 PM. Many hands make light work...and will make Christmas lights work! Come and help.

SERVERS

SUN 12/20

7:30 AM LOW: Brueggemann Bros.

9:00 AM HIGH: MC: P. Omlor CHAPLAINS: C. Richesson, M. Simpson TH: D. Simpson ACs: Na. McClorey, T. England TORCH: C. Vander Putten, D. England, C. Arlinghaus, J. McGinnis

11:30 AM LOW: A.D. Kinnett, J. Kolenich

4:45 PM VESPERS & BENEDICTION: G. Miller

5:45 PM LOW: G. Miller



¶ RORATE MASSES

Rorate Masses this week are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 7:00 AM, and Saturday at 7:30 AM. Don't miss these beautiful candlelit Masses.

¶ NEXT SUNDAY: ADVENT IV

The Blessing of Expectant Mothers will be available at the Communion Rail after all Masses next Sunday. Catechism Classes will be at 10:40 AM. Vespers with Benediction will be at 4:45 PM.

📖 **Set Your Missal:** Advent IV, second collect of Our Lady in Advent. Trinity Preface.

**A CHARMING CHRISTMAS TALE 1:
A MIDNIGHT MASS IN BRITTANY**

No one who has ever attended Midnight Mass needs to be told how greatly the usual impressiveness of the Holy Sacrifice is then enhanced by the solemnity of the hour and the silent calm of the exterior world. Whether it be celebrated in some humble village chapel without grandeur of ceremonial or jubilant bursts of music, or in the vast cathedral of a Catholic city with all the pomp and splendor which the Church's liturgy recognizes as congruous to the observance of perhaps her greatest festival; whether it be the ordinary low Mass or the most solemn pontifical high one,—all the attendants thereat experience unwonted devotion and fervor and religious joy.

As star differs from star in glory, so may Midnight Masses, according to circumstances, vary in the degrees of their power to move; and one of the most impressive that has ever perhaps been witnessed was celebrated by a priest of Brittany something more than a hundred years ago. It was during the period of the French Revolution, when the frenzied soldiery denounced all religion as superstition, and prevented both the celebration of the august Sacrifice of the Altar and the gathering together of priests and people for any form of religious service.

At one seaport Breton town, the revolutionaries had for weeks been holding high revel, and oppressing the people with especial rigor because of their unflinching devotedness to their Faith. Brittany has always been the stanchest Catholic stronghold in France, whether king or emperor or president ruled the country, and whether the Church was prosperous as in the olden monarchy, or, as is the case today, oppressed and persecuted.

Christmas Eve had come, and the hour was growing late. Noisy shouts and bursts of uproarious laughter could be heard from the soldiers' quarters; but elsewhere in the town all was still. Still, but not motionless. Silent groups of two or three or four men and women—yes, and little children—passed



quietly from the darkened houses and made their way beneath the frosty stars to the shore. By eleven o'clock hundreds had gathered and all were looking seaward. Suddenly, about a mile from land, appeared a twinkling light; and, as if it were an awaited signal, the crowd took their places in a fleet of fishing boats and sailed away. From other points along the coast came other fleets with further hundreds, all converging toward the signal lantern.

As they drew near the light, it was seen to be fastened to the rigging of a good-sized schooner, and boat after boat took up its position on that side of the vessel farthest from the port. No one boarded the schooner, but all knelt in their places; for, raised on a platform above the vessel's deck, was an altar arranged with protected candles, missal, and Mass cards; and at its foot stood a venerable white-haired priest about to begin the Holy Sacrifice.

Surely never celebrant had a more devout congregation, and never did even St. Peter's majestic dome seem a tithe so grandiose as the star-gemmed canopy of blue above him. The solemn service went slowly on; the wind that was blowing freshly an hour before had sunk to a mere zephyr; even the natural heaving of the ocean seemed stilled to the placid immobility of a landlocked summer lake.

Many a heart in the attendant throng felt well assured that this was the last Mass they would ever hear: the cry of the Revolution was not only "Death to religion," but, with increasing frequency, "Death to all who profess religion"; and their turn would surely come. The thought intensified their fervor, as it confirmed their fortitude; and when the good old priest, at the conclusion of the service, bade them suffer, and, if need were, die for the Christ at whose mystic death they had just assisted, their spirits were wrought up to the martyr's tension. True, the dawning Christmas Day would bring them once again in contact with fierce oppressors, strangers

to Bethlehem's peace and good-will; but, strong in faith and of confident hope, each lowly soul would welcome the opportunity to give, at the cost of life itself, glory to God in the highest.

With calm, grave eyes and even-pulsing breath,

They dipped their still oars in the darkened space;

Strong now the hands fast rowing back to death!

And strong the simple hearts, new clothed in grace—

The hushed and quiet souls, ere long to meet

Their Savior face to face!

— *The Ave Maria*

✠ THE POETRY CORNER

**THE WEARINESS OF THE PROPHET
ELIJAH**

Lord
You understand such
immense weariness
When one only whispers
Release your servant now
Deliver me from the scraps
of hunger and thirst
Called life



I don't need more than
The shade of a broom-tree to rest my
head
A shawl of darkness for eyes
Call back the angel
Who hastens with bread and a jar of
water
Send me a long purifying sleep
Childless
Lift my loneliness above its burden
Above every bereavement

Lord
You know the weariness of your
prophets
You wake them with a jolt of new pain
To place a new desert beneath their feet
To give them a new mouth a new voice
And a new name

I found this on the internet: "While exploring and praying with 3 Kings 19:4-8 I came across this powerful poem by Polish poet Anna Kamienska who lived under communism and came of age during the horrors of the Nazi occupation of Poland."

✠ THE BISHOP'S CORNER ✠

Were it not for the Communist Revolution going on about us, this has really been a lovely Advent. I note this with gratitude today as we mark the halfway point of this season of preparation and longing for Jesus to be born again on Christmas. The Advent succession of special Sundays and feasts, the beautiful music and altars, and certainly the mellow if short days of sun; all cheer us on this mid-Advent Sunday of Gaudete.

So, we were blessed with an almost *perfect* Holy Day for Our Lady's perfect and Immaculate Conception. The pure white poinsettias and the sermon pointed to America's Empress conceived without sin, Our Lady of Guadalupe. The apparition occurred in what was "Just America" then, Mexico today. After Mass we had the tenth anniversary reading of Fr. Abram Ryan's magnificent poem for the feast, with our best attendance ever. Sung Vespers, Benediction and the third Mass completed this beautiful day. I never go out anymore, but we did manage a festive and maskless lunch for the occasion. Joy!

I make bold to insert here a little doggerel verse in homage to the Poet, but also with my apologies:

Fell the snow on the feast of St. Andrew
Dark and icy and white
The morrow would dawn December
Cold and clear and bright
The Virgin comes first all sinless
Who gives birth to the Light in the night
No need to question the sequence
'Tis all the work of His might.

We are marking St. Lucy's Day with special music and a St. Lucy Procession at the High Mass. **Fr. Lehtoranta** remembers these from growing up in Finland. Although Scandinavia was Lutheran, there are some saints even Protestants could not give up. Think of St. Nicholas in Holland. Thus in the dark North they still honored the Saint of Light.

Fr. Lehtoranta prepared today's procession with the help of the choir and his very popular Sodality of Charity. One young lady portrays St. Lucy, and wears a crown of burning candles. Carefully, I suppose. The other maidens of her court, also wearing white, accompany her. Soon the dark days will lighten and lengthen, soon the Light of the World will come, this charming custom says.

Tomorrow the Electoral College is supposed to meet. Please pray against the darkness. Tonight they say to expect a meteor shower, the brightest of the year, and under a new moon. Tomorrow, too, Bergoglio's Argentina will experience another full eclipse. More darkness at its source.

Thanks to everybody who helped with Christmas lighting and St. Lucy's lights yesterday. See you Friday for the big push for Christmas church decorating? I am sure it will be beautiful. Remember the Communists and their stooges want to crush Christ's Birthday beneath their Covid cover. So it's probably more important than ever, the best Christmas ever. We hope to welcome many to the birthday celebration to show Christ is not crushed out so easily. Bidden or not He comes on the altar, and will come again at the end.

Oh, and happy Rejoice Sunday. Christ is nigh!

– Bishop Dolan



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Mary, the Mexican Lady,
Is brown and beautiful,
Her cerulean mantle
Spotted with stars.



Who could wrap a woman in sky,
As she labors for mankind,
But the One whom she
Would bear and wrap—
A Gift for all creation's lap?

– Rita Simmonds

WHEN YOU LIGHT THE ADVENT WREATH ON SATURDAY
Stir up Thy power and come, we pray Thee, O Lord, and with great might succor us; that our deliverance, which our sins impede, may be hastened by the help of Thy grace and the forgiveness of Thy mercy. Who livest and reignest forever and ever, Amen. (*Say this prayer Saturday evening, as you light all four candles on your Advent wreath.*)

CATECHISM CORNER

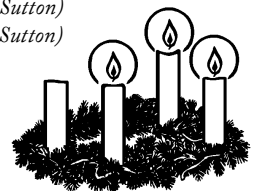
Every Christian is bound to believe that in one God there are three distinct Persons, perfectly equal, of the same substance, and having the same nature: the Father, who proceeds from no one; the Son, who is born of the Father before all ages; and the Holy Ghost, who proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son as from one principle; and that the three Persons are all equally eternal, equal in wisdom and power, and are all three one and the same Lord, one and the same God.

Masses sent to the Missions:

Intentions of Keith & Karla Lawrence & family (*Richard & Gloria Z.*)
David Tseng – health & conversion to true Catholic faith (*H.Y.*)
Special Intentions (*Connor Sutton*)
McGinnis Family (*Connor Sutton*)

Collection Report

Sunday, December 6th.....\$5,625.00
Second Collection.....\$1,313.00
Alter Christus.....\$237.00



✠ CALENDAR

MON	12/14/20	WITHIN THE OCTAVE 8:00 AM Low Mass Joseph Simpson – Happy Birthday (<i>Sarah Burns</i>) 11:25 AM High Mass For our country (<i>M.E.G.</i>)
TUE	12/15/20	OCTAVE DAY OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION 7:00 AM Rorate Mass Alvaro & Gabriel Bayer (<i>D. Bayer & sons</i>) 8:00 AM Low Mass †Helen Rose Smith (<i>Edward W. Smith</i>) 11:25 AM Requiem High Mass & Absolution †Ronald A. Lotarski (<i>Mr. & Mrs. Mark Lotarski & family</i>) 5:00 PM Low Mass Anne Marie Omlor (<i>Margaret Omlor</i>)
WED	12/16/20	EMBER WEDNESDAY FAST & PARTIAL ABSTINENCE ST. EUSEBIUS, BpM 7:00 AM Rorate Mass Mary McGuire & family (<i>Mary L.</i>) 8:00 AM Low Mass Richard Zbilicki – Birthday blessings (<i>Gloria Zbilicki</i>) 11:25 AM High Mass Mary Beth Grumblatt & children (<i>M.E.G.</i>) ☞ 5:15 PM Low Mass †Gary Amyx
THU	12/17/20	FERIAL DAY • ST. LAZARUS, BpC 7:00 AM Rorate Mass †Fr. Cekada (<i>Collin Smith</i>) 8:00 AM Low Mass †John Metz & †Aunt Annie (<i>Judy</i>) 11:25 AM High Mass Isaac Brueggemann (<i>Alex McConnell</i>) Opening of the Christmas Novena
FRI	12/18/20	EMBER FRIDAY FAST & ABSTINENCE EXPECTATION OF OUR LADY 8:00 AM High Mass My students & godchildren (<i>Jennifer Richesson</i>) ☞ N.B. Special Schedule Christmas Church Decorating all day. You are welcome to give a hand! 5:15 PM Confessions & Rosary 5:45 PM Low Mass In honor of Our Lady of Fatima for the Poor Souls in Purgatory (<i>A.M. Omlor</i>) 6:30 PM Sacred Heart Novena & Benediction
SAT	12/19/20	EMBER SATURDAY FAST & PARTIAL ABSTINENCE VIGIL OF ST. THOMAS 7:15 AM Confessions 7:30 AM Rorate Mass Mr. & Mrs. Levi Giese & Anthony – special intentions (<i>JC Simpson & S. Burns</i>) 8:15 AM Alma & Sermon 8:30 AM Low Mass Victor Ritze – 90 th Birthday (<i>Joe & Mary Kunkel</i>)
SUN	12/20/20	ADVENT IV 7:05 AM Rosary 7:30 AM Low Mass Jim Soli (Dad) Thanks for everything you do! (<i>Mary L.</i>) 9:00 AM High Mass Special Intention (<i>Patrick A. Omlor</i>) 10:40 AM Sunday Classes 11:05 AM Rosary 11:30 AM Low Mass †Dennis Hille (<i>The Ushers</i>) 4:45 PM Vespers & Benediction 5:45 PM Low Mass †Ryan Greenwell (<i>Eva Nellenbach</i>)

✠ ST. LUCY

One can easily imagine what a young Christian woman had to contend with in pagan Sicily in the year 300. If you have trouble imagining, just glance at today's pleasure-at-all-costs world and the barriers it presents against leading a good Christian life.

Because her name means "light," St. Lucy very early became the great patron saint for the "light of the body"—the eyes. All over Christianity her help was invoked against diseases of the eyes, especially the danger of blindness. This is the reason why she is often pictured with a plate in hand on which lie two eyeballs.

...She also is the patron of the gondoliers in Venice (where her relics repose), whose familiar song, "Santa Lucia," is an affectionate tribute to her.

...In Scandinavia before the Reformation, St. Lucy's Day was one of unusual celebration and festivity because, for the people of Sweden and Norway, she was the great "light saint" who turned the tides of their long winter and brought the light of day to renewed victory.

This is the reason why her lore has survived in the Scandinavian countries even after the Reformation and calendar reform, which brought the solstice back to December 23. In Sweden and Norway it is still a custom on December 13 for a girl in a white dress (representing the saint), with a wreath on her head in which burning candles are placed, to awaken the family from sleep and offer a tray with coffee and cakes. The impersonation is called *Lussibrud* (Lucy bride) and her pastry is *Lussekattor*.

...In the liturgy of the Church, St. Lucy has held, and still holds today, the inspiring position of a saint whose very name reminds the faithful at the middle of Advent that her own "light" is only a reflection of the great "Light of the World" which is to start shining at Bethlehem on Christmas Day. It is as if she would say: "I am only a little flame in Advent showing you the way: Behold, the Lord will come, And all His saints with Him, And on that day, There will be a great light. Alleluia."

PRAYER TO ST. LUCY

Let us pray to St. Lucy, for the intercession for all those with eye illnesses and for the protection of the 'eyes of our faith' of all of us.

O St. Lucy, you preferred to let your eyes be torn out instead of denying the faith and defiling your soul, and God, through an extraordinary miracle, replaced them with another pair of sound and perfect eyes to reward your virtue and faith, appointing you as the protector against eye diseases. I come to you for you to protect my eyesight and to heal the illness in my eyes. Preserve also the eyes of my soul, the faith, through which I can know my God, understand His teachings, recognize His love for me and never miss the road that leads me to where you, St. Lucy, can be found in the company of the angels and saints. St. Lucy, protect my eyes and preserve my faith. Amen.

